

BRIERLEY-HILL  
Urban Sanitary Authority.


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THE ANNUAL  
REPORTS  
OF THE  
Medical Officer of Health  
AND  
Sanitary Inspector,  
FOR THE  
YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31st, 1893.

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# The Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health.

Mr. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

During the past year the number of deaths registered was 226, of which 128 were males, and 98 females.

The population is estimated at 11,897.

The Death Rate for the year 1893 is, therefore, 18·99 per 1,000 of the population.

The Death Rate in the preceding year is 20·3 per 1,000 of the population.

The number of Births during the year is 466, or 39·17 per 1,000 ; males, 238 ; females, 228.

The ages at which the deaths took place during the year are as follows :—

Under 1 year	...	78	15 years and under 25	7
1 year and under 5	...	33	25 years and under 65	50
5 years and under 15	...	11	65 years and upwards	47

Eleven Inquests were held during the year. The verdicts were :— Natural Causes, 6 ; Accidents, 5.

Comparative Tables of Birth Rate, Death Rate, and Zymotic Death Rate, with corresponding rates taken from the Report of the County Medical Officer for the year 1892 :—

	Birth Rate per 1,000 of Population.	Death Rate per 1,000 of Population.	Date.
Brierley-Hill ...	39·1	18·9	1893
County of Stafford Urban ...	36·3	19·2	1892
England ...	30·5	19·0	1892
Large Towns ...	31·8	20·6	

### Zymotic Mortality per 1,000 of Population.

Brierley-Hill.	County of Stafford. Urban.	England. Large Towns.	England. General.
2·8	2·03	2·63	1·90

Some further Tables will be found at the end of this Report, which I hope will be useful. It will be there seen that the Zymotic Death Rate for Brierley-Hill from the seven principal Zymotic diseases is 0·6 for the year 1893.

### S M A L L - P O X .

Known cases, 39; Deaths, 5.

The closing sentence of my last Annual Report calls attention to the possibility of an outbreak of Small-pox, and the necessity of providing some means of isolating the first cases, should it occur.

On the 31st May, three cases were notified at the Eagle Tavern, Turner's Lane, an outlying part of the district. The Sanitary Committee was called together at once, and weekly meetings were held. In my Report to the Committee I advised isolation as the only possible way of preventing Small-pox from spreading; tents to be immediately purchased, and a site obtained to place them on; this being the best way of meeting the present difficulty, and at this time of the year, the best means of treating Small-pox. The *Public-House to be closed*, and the owner compensated.

Steps were immediately taken by the Sanitary Committee to rent a cottage, or failing that, to procure a site on which to pitch tents. We were, however, beset with difficulties on every hand. Eventually land was secured at Merry Hill, and it was decided to erect an Isolation Hospital, of wood and iron, to be completed in six weeks. At this time there was only one case, in an outlying part of the district.

Eva Knight, Turner's Lane, who was notified on the 7th July, was allowed to expose herself before she was free from contagion, and on the 14th August, a companion of her's, named Rider, was notified. The disease having thus obtained a fresh start, several others followed, and



on the 26th of September, as the Hospital was not ready, tents were procured, and the patients then suffering were removed to them.

Eva Knight was subsequently taken before the magistrates and fined.

Between September 26th and October 26th, five cases were notified, and promptly removed to the tents. No other case occurring throughout November, it was confidently hoped the disease had been stamped out. On December 16th the disease received another spurt. I believe there are several reasons why this happened. At Brierley-Hill, a child was taken ill towards the end of November, with what was supposed to be Chicken-pox. *No doctor saw this child until it had completely recovered.* There can be no doubt this was modified Small-pox. Six of the cases notified on December 17th, 18th, and 19th, were known to have visited at this public-house. Believing that the parents of this child did not wilfully expose it, the Sanitary Committee decided not to prosecute. The patients at this time were being treated in the Hospital. Other cases, however, occurred, which could not be traced to this source. There was a house at Mount Pleasant, just outside our district, where Small-pox was known to exist, and be under treatment at home. On the other side of the town, at Brockmoor, also outside our district, a child had been suffering from Small-pox, *and was not seen by any doctor*, and thus escaped notification. Two cases were traced to this source. Then it was discovered that the male ward attendant, at the Isolation Hospital, had been visiting certain public-houses at night time, and he had probably helped to spread the disease. This attendant was at once discharged.

At the beginning of this outbreak of Small-pox, up to the time of placing the cases in tents, on the 26th of September, every possible effort was made to stamp out the disease, and where the disease was known to exist, the isolation was successful. It was the visiting of friends, before the cases were removed, which baffled our efforts.

The means adopted were:—Printed notices of precautionary measures, and penalties for neglect, were left at every infected house. The inmates and neighbours, who were known to have been there were vaccinated. Children living near such houses were kept from school. Disinfectants, with printed instructions, were supplied free of cost, and in every case the bedding was destroyed, and the houses thoroughly disinfected, and fumigated, after recovery or death. The fatal cases were

buried within 24 hours. Placards were also issued urging vaccination and re-vaccination, and amongst certain classes this precaution was very generally adopted.

No. of cases of Small-pox, 39.			With 3 or more marks.	2 Marks.	1 Mark.	Deaths.
Vaccinated	...	36	18	14	5	1 with 4 marks. 2 „ 1 „
Not Vaccinated	...	2	...	...	...	Both died.
Re-vaccinated	...	0				

I desire to express my appreciation of the manner in which your Sanitary Inspector discharged his duty in connection with this epidemic. He had a most disagreeable and difficult task amongst some of the poorer patients, and devoted his whole time to it.

### SCARLET FEVER.

Known cases, 32 ; Deaths, 1.

The epidemic was continued from last year. Isolation had to be carried out at the infected houses. Printed notices were left at each house of the precautions to be adopted, and of the penalties incurred by neglect. After recovery or death, every house was thoroughly fumigated and disinfected by the Sanitary Inspector. Notice was sent to the Schools' Inspector, and the children infected were kept away for three months. During the Midsummer holidays every public school in the district was thoroughly fumigated, under the superintendence of the Sanitary Inspector, and the rooms were afterwards cleansed and lime-washed.

The disease abated for five weeks ; but in the last week in August two cases were notified. These cases did not come through the schools. I believe they came from outside our district. Six cases were notified from the end of August to December 31st.

The disease throughout has been of a mild type—only one death having taken place.

I may add here that the ventilation of the Board Schools has been thoroughly enquired into. With the assistance of an architect, an improved system of ventilation has been drawn up, for which a contract has been accepted, and the work will in due course be carried out.

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### DIPHTHERIA.

Known cases, 2 ; Deaths, 0.

Both of a mild type. In one case which occurred at Potter-street, an open ditch on the premises was believed to be the cause ; this has since been got rid of.

### MEMBRANOUS CROUP.

Known cases, 2 ; Died, 2.

In both these cases the houses were ordered to be cleansed, and the spouting, which was causing a damp wall in one of the houses, to be remedied.

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### ENTERIC FEVER.

Known cases, 10 ; Deaths, 0.

Two cases at Parkes-street. S. S. W. water supply. The house was, however, in a very dirty condition, and this may have been the cause.—One case at Potter-street. Water supplied from a well on Barradale's property, which I had analysed and condemned a year before. S. S. W. water has since been laid on.—One at a house in Fenton-street. S. S. W. water. An unhealthy and badly ventilated house.—One at a house at Turner's Lane. S. S. W. water. No apparent cause.—The remainder of the cases occurred at Dudley-street. Houses supplied by water from Goodman's well. I have examined this water and condemned it. Adjoining this yard, pigs were kept so as to be a nuisance. Notice to abate was given. As the owner of the pigs did not comply, he was taken before the magistrates and fined. The nuisance has since been abated.

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### ERYSIPELAS.

Known cases, 17 ; Deaths, 0.

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### WHOOPING COUGH.

Known cases, 5 ; Deaths, 5.

Only those that died came directly under my notice, through the



death returns. At the same time there were a considerable number of cases in the district.

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Amongst new cases of sickness I may mention five severe cases of Lead Poisoning, with Paralysis, which have come under my notice. They were all men and worked at glass works in the neighbourhood, but only one of them at Brierley-Hill.

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**General Death Rate.**—This is below the average, and is so far satisfactory. We may note that Pneumonia caused 16 deaths and Phthisis 10. Nine of the deaths from Pneumonia occurred in December. Influenza was prevalent in that and the preceding month. This epidemic of Influenza was of much milder type generally than the preceding epidemics of the same disease.

**Diarrhœa.**—For the last four years the death rate from Diarrhœa has been steadily declining, and had been much below that of the preceding ten years; but this year it has increased considerably. I think it will be found, however, that this increase was not confined to Brierley-Hill, but prevailed throughout the country generally.

Fifteen of the 21 deaths occurred in the months of July, August, and September, and some of them being choleraic in character,

In one suspicious case, that of a young girl who died at North-street, I made a *post mortem* examination of the body. Nothing of a specific nature was discovered.

Public attention was directed to the prevalence of this disease, and they were cautioned against permitting nuisances to exist, to guard against unwholesome food, and to boil all the milk and water used for domestic purposes.

Several lots of unwholesome food brought into the markets or hawked about the streets were seized and condemned, and the offenders taken before the magistrates and fined.

**Infant Mortality.**—Of the 78 deaths under one year of age, 33 are due to premature birth or insufficient vitality at birth. These cases were not due to bad feeding. In an industrial community such as this, there will always be a high percentage of early and improvident marriages, where the comforts and necessities needed to promote healthy child-



bearing will be wanting, and a sickly progeny the result. Four of these 33 births were illegitimate, and in two only of the 33 the mothers worked from home. In children a few months old, and in those between one and five years, a very important factor in the mortality is the overcrowding in small badly-ventilated bed rooms, many of the cottages having one room upstairs only; and again, the bad habit which is general amongst the poor of putting the baby to sleep with the parents. It is difficult for the Sanitary Officers to exercise much influence for good over the habits of these people. The ventilation and over-crowding can be dealt with, but in a district where houses with sufficient accommodation are very scarce, and the overcrowding is confined to one family, the defect is not so easily overcome as may be desired. This difficulty has often occurred in my inspections, and I have always pointed out the evil results of living under such circumstances; but to take extreme measures, in many cases, especially amongst the cottage owners, would mean turning the family into the street. At Delph, for instance, where the cottage tenants principally abound, the owners are generally too poor to make the required alterations.

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### SANITARY WORK OF THE YEAR.

Foremost under this head stands the erection of an Isolation Hospital at Merry Hill, with twenty beds, and the purchase of a Washington Lyon Steam Disinfector, which has been placed on the same ground. This is a great advance in the sanitary requirements of the town, upon which the Board may be heartily congratulated, and I feel sure, as time goes on, the public will have reason to appreciate and acknowledge the advantage of this important step.

To make this department complete, it would be well to provide an ambulance carriage. The present arrangement of using an old cab and sending it back to the cab proprietor's, is not altogether satisfactory. When the epidemic of Small-pox is over, I would like to hear of the cab being burned.

**Sewerage.**—Mr. Wilcox, Sanitary Engineer, of Birmingham, was engaged to advise the Board upon the best means of dealing with the sewerage of the whole district, and he has sent in his report. When the Board can see their way to adopting the scheme Mr. Wilcox recommends, or one of the two schemes, I am satisfied it will be of great advantage

to the district. The possibilities which it opens up of adopting the water carriage system—in preference to the abominable ashpit and midden system—of dealing with excrement removal are well worthy of consideration. What is known as the slop closet system, is being gradually introduced throughout the country, and its advantages over the old midden system, economically and from a sanitary point of view, have been very favourably commented upon.

For further information on this subject, I refer you to the last Annual Report of the County Medical Officer, Dr. Reid, pages 47 to 58, on “Excrement and Refuse Disposal.”

**Water Supply.**—In May I had to report on the unsatisfactory state of the S. S. W. Company's water. Numerous living animalculæ were present in the water; but this was soon altered, and the supply has since been good.

Owing to the new mains that have been laid, from the pumping station, which the company have established at Prestwood, there has been less complaint of a deficiency, and there is now every reason to believe the supply will be ample. I have frequently tested this water and believe it to be of very good quality.

The company's water has been laid on at Level-street. At Delph the water has not yet been laid on. The Board have met the deficiency in that part of the district since August last, by permitting the people to obtain a supply for an hour twice daily, from the water stand at Delph, which is used for supplying the water carts. In this way much suffering has no doubt been saved, the people having eagerly made use of the opportunity; and the real necessity for laying on the water to the houses in that neighbourhood has been amply demonstrated. I hope the Board will be able to insist upon this being done during the ensuing year.

Nine samples of water have been taken from wells in the district and delivered to me by your Sanitary Inspector. They were all condemned. The company's water has since been supplied.

The open sewer across the fields at Moor Lane, leading to the filter beds, has been complained of, and by laying pipes, the nuisance has been carried some 200 yards further from Williams-street. The sewage is exposed at the footbridge and is still complained of. This part of the sewer should be covered in. At present it is little better than an open

ditch, and the sides, being of earth, adds considerably to the risk by saturation of the ground, and the clinging of refuse. In hot weather foul emanations cannot fail to arise.

**Magisterial Proceedings.** --Reference to the Sanitary Inspector's Report (appended) will show what has been done in this direction. The purveyor of inferior and unwholesome meat has always found a ready market at Brierley-Hill, and has recently become more adventurous.

The prosecutions that have lately taken place will, doubtless, exercise a wholesome restraining influence over these tradesmen for some time to come.

**Swine and Other Animals.** — There has been less complaint during the year. The wooden erections in which some of these animals are kept are a frequent source of nuisance.

This sort of building should not be permitted except under defined conditions as to drainage, and a brick foundation some inches above the ground. They should also have an impervious floor. The soil round these places gets saturated with filth unless the precautions are strictly observed.

**Scavenging and Night Soil Removal.**—I have no complaint to make, excepting what I have said before, viz., that the ashpits are much too large, and that consequently the removal of the contents is not sufficiently frequent. The work is now done by contract, a plan which I do not advise. The work should be done by the Board's servants, and, for my own part, I cannot see how it can be done more efficiently and economically by contract.

In conclusion, I beg to thank the Chairman and members of the Sanitary Committee for the support they have given me in carrying out my duties, and to congratulate the Board upon the advance they have made towards meeting the sanitary requirements of the town.

I have the honour to be,

Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

H. D'ARCY ELLIS,

M. O. H.



Area in Acres, 1027.      Population, 1893, 11,897.

Mortality from all Causes, distinguishing Deaths in Children under 5 years.

T A B L E I.

	Small-Pox.	Scarlatina.	Diphtheria.	Membranous Croup.	Fevers.			Relapsing.	Cholera.	Erysipelas.	Measles.	Whooping Cough.	Diarrhoea, Dysentry.	Rheumatic Fever.	Bronchitis & Pleurisy.	Pneumonia.	Phthisis.	Heart Disease.	Injuries.	All others.
Under 5 Years .....	1	1	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5	15	..	9	6	2	..	1	65
5 Years and upwards...	4	..	..	1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	6	..	17	10	8	18	4	52

REGISTERED BIRTHS.			REGISTERED DEATHS.			MORTALITY FROM ALL CAUSES AT SUBJOINED AGES.					
Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Under 1 year.	1 and under 5.	5 and under 15.	15 and under 25.	25 and under 65.	65 and upwards.
238	228	466	128	98	226	78	33	11	7	50	47

VITAL STATISTICS.  
TABLE II.

	1893.	1892.	1891.	1890.	1889.	1888.	1887.	1886.	1885.	1884.	1883.
Birth Rate ..	39.17	36.40	38.12	34.32	30.0	32.4	31.2	38.94	36.0	37.40	38.30
Death Rate ..	18.99	20.3	17.83	20.9	18.0	16.9	18.6	16.7	19.5	20.2	24.0
Zymotic Death Rate	0.6	1.09	.0006	1.6	2.73	2.73	3.11	2.2	3.6	1.18	5.66
Deaths under 1 year	78	76	81	91	55	68	59	62	88	92	72

**INFECTIOUS DISEASES.—Monthly Notifications.**  
**T A B L E I I I.**

1893.	January.	February.	March.	April.	May.	June.	July.	August.	September.	October.	November.	December.	
Small-pox .....					3	2	1	8	8	3	14	39	
Cholera .....													
Diphtheria .....		1											1
Membranous Croup .....			1		1								2
Erysipelas .....	1	1	2		1		2	3	3	1	1	2	17
Scarlet Fever.....	5		2	8	3	4		3	2	1	3	1	32
Typhus Fever.....													
Enteric Fever.....							1		1	2	3	3	10
Puerperal Fever.....													
Totals .....	6	2	5	8	8	6	4	14	14	7	7	20	101



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Sanitary \* Inspector's \* Report.

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## Brierley-Hill Urban Sanitary Authority.



MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present my report of work done for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December, 1893, in the Urban Sanitary District of Brierley-Hill, under the jurisdiction of your Board.

During the year 192 notices have been served to abate nuisances arising from defective Privies and Ashpits, which have been complied with.

The number of houses unfit for habitation, and which have been closed in pursuance of notice, has been two, while sixty-three others have been disinfected after infectious disease.

The cases of overcrowding in the district have been fifteen, all of which have been abated by notice.

The drainage in connection with 33 houses was found to be defective, and notices served. These have since been rectified by the laying of new drains or re-construction of existing ones, and properly trapped.

In 50 cases animals were found kept either in the prohibited area, or so as to be a nuisance. In each case notices have been served, and, with the exception of one, found to be effective.

The Dairies, Cowsheds, and Milk-shops within the district number 23. These have been inspected periodically, and strict cleanliness has been observed.

The same may be said of the 15 Registered Slaughter-houses, inspected also periodically.

The Properties on which notice has been served to provide a supply of Water is 42, and the number includes nine cases in which the existing wells were polluted with animal or sewage matter.

These have been complied with, and the South Staffordshire Water Company have laid their water on to a considerable number of houses of which no official complaints have been made.

During the year the men in your Contractor's employ have visited 3,794 houses, 2,537 privies, and cleansed 2,307 ashpits, which has resulted in the removal of 9,873 loads of night soil, and also have cleansed 19 water closets.

As regards magisterial proceedings, it has been necessary to proceed in eight cases, viz :—Four cases of unwholesome meat, two of diseased fish, one of cucumbers, and one of pigs being kept within a prohibited area. These proceedings were successful and fines inflicted in each case.

Suggestions as to sanitary improvements have been carried out, in many instances, without the aid of notices.

I have the honour to be,

Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

JNO. ALDEN,

Sanitary Inspector.







